



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0437TX-1 for Irving Independent School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	9
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Grant states that mathematics is the single most important area of development in prep for college and career. District data indicates all 13 secondary schools missed the annual yearly progress in mathematics target set by NCLB. This grant effectively proposes initiatives that focus on improving deficit mathematical skill sets so all students are proficient. -Extensive teacher training and coaching in mathematics Grades 6-12 will ensure a continuum of learning and application. - iAIM to the Nth degree program with math focus, project based, career driven math teaching and learning strategies establish a strong instructional base for this core area. -District proposes to reconstruct classrooms to focus on personalized learning by increasing the access to hardware and software and extensive training on its use. The training compnent is essential for effective implementaiton. -Instructional program alignment 6-12 appears comprehensive. Grant does not indicate cross grade level curricular alignment with upper elementary and middle school teachers. -District has long established strategies that use data to drive instruction, the proposed expansion of and access to this data will give objective feedback regarding both teaching and learning. -Identified significant gaps in quality of instruction and level of technology integration by teachers justifies the emphasis on teacher professional development in both mathematics and technology. -Using software that informs student of personal achievement in an on-demand format allows students to make informed decisions regarding their education. -Supplement district curricula with CSCOPE curriculum system. This intervention effectively addresses students who are performing below grade level by employing a project based approach that applies mathematics in a career context. 		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Applicant demonstrates a comprehensive process was initiated to develop their vision. Key realization was that District must reframe basic assumptions on how math is taught and how it is learned. 		

- Discovery meetings with key partners followed by planning sessions were held to discuss at length: district's middle and high school math achievement as measured by Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills, and mathematics familiarity with technology. Second series of meeting with leadership focused on increasing student math skills by being taught by highly effective teachers.
- Vision priorities: Implement a project-based career driven math teaching and learning model; Reconstruct classrooms to support personalized learning; Build capacity for highly effective teachers; Assure technology use is available to all students.
- Logic models outlined appear to be comprehensive. They include a model for personalized learning and a model to develop and support highly effective teachers. A smooth transition is illustrated by this excerpt from the personalized learning logic model: Implementation: develop local project-based learning environments; Outputs: Project based math content implemented; Outcomes: Improvement in student math skills that will lead into students on track to career/college readiness, academic proficiency, and improved graduation rates. All inputs noted within the grant are included.
- Data provided outlines need, identifies student population and justifies selected strategies, for example, Irving performed between 7% and 20% lower in the state's overall measure of college readiness in mathematics. District utilized data to identify and address areas of greatest need. Armed with this information they identified key areas and effective strategies, programs and resources to adopt to address them.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)

10

10

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Thorough fact finding and development process including all stakeholders occurred as the first step in developing this grant proposal. Data was used extensively to identify and verify grant concepts. District built on experience as a recognized innovator in implementing educational technology proved essential in the process.

The proposed model incorporates successful components of existing program and incorporates new resources, technology and authentic learning that is personalized to the learner.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)

10

9

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

-Irving ISD currently uses data to make critical decisions, with great success.

-The new vision proposed for math instruction expands the importance of creating a data culture and instruction that is engaging and innovative. District has identified gaps in achievement in math and created strategies to reverse these trends.

-National Student Clearing House lists Irving ISD graduates do enroll in college (62%) and technical school (13%). The district believes their proposal will encourage more students to attend and successfully complete college and tech school as they will have the mathematics foundation they need. Career exploration training is critical for success here.

In summary, Irving is poised to take advantage of resources that turn student challenges into opportunities. The focus on math instruction, within the secondary programs, creates a positive ripple effect on the system for years to come.

B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	13

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

-District has shown success in implementing innovative programming such as the Signature Studies Program at the high school level. Plans to implement iAIM program at the middle school level will create an introductory experience for all students. District has received national recognition and support.

- District effectively addressed the challenge of over 3/4 the student body speaking languages other than English by imbedding dual language instruction programming K-8 . "Dual language is currently available Kg through Grade 8 with plans to offer this model through Grade 12"

-District has a low student - teacher ratio and an experienced faculty. This is a major opportunity for students to receive more 1:1 direct instruction and develop a close rapport with classmates.

- A deficit is that only 36% of faculty hold advanced degrees. Continuous professional development will assist but not supplant the formal training teachers need to develop master teacher abilities.
- Grant does note extensive high school STEM course offerings and middle school opportunities.
- Signature Studies programs are focused in content and available in every secondary building throughout the district. The grant does not share how students are chosen for each program.
- District laid out plans to utilize student performance data to make informed curricula/program decisions. Also planned to involve students in decision-making regarding course participation etc.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5
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(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

- District has an office of public information and extensive website.
- Printed materials also available. Ample opportunity for parents and students to access information and educational resources.
- Use of parent notification system provides effective home-school communication.

District demonstrates that they are effective in communicating to their publics by using these resources. This established public communications system has the potential to build trust and support for the school district.

The proposal outlines a variety of ways the district reports to their publics including the Balanced Scorecard system. In addition the district notes that "Irving ISD has been a data-decision making district for a long time and has worked diligently to make all of the district's data systems interoperable. MUNIS, the district's Human resource and financial data management system, stores data about employees and links data into the account management system".

Also noted are the investments the district has made in on-line resource tools that support instruction the expansion of its Virtual School offerings. This is all maintained and supported by a fairly large district technical staff that supports students, teachers and parents. They insure the reader there are sufficient instructional and technical personnel at each campus to keep things running efficiently.

This proposal does not provide specific personnel or salary information in the narrative but does list some of this information in the financial documents included in the budget section of this document.

These expenditures are outlined in the budget documents and timeline included in the appendixes. Narrative discussed commitment for staffing and re-assignment of existing staffing to implement the initiative proposed in the grant by job title (ex. Technology Specialist).

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

- Professional evaluation system adopted appears to address key areas of improvement and is aligned to Texas state standards.

- Analyzing data to assess teacher effectiveness and student success will provide strong impact on programming.

The district has implemented programs that will establish a foundation for the enhanced initiatives proposed such as iAIM to the Nth Degree. Proposal notes that "the iAIM project will build upon and intensify the established career-focused infrastructure for all students".

- Applicant demonstrates a record of success and provided information showing success. Examples Signature Studies program was established to "increase rigor, choice and student interest. They also converted two existing programs to this format with great success. District recognized that great benefits would be received by creating a preliminary program for the middle school grades.

- Over 55 STEM courses are currently offered and proposal outlines how these will be foundational to those career paths and critical when addressing the improvement of math skills sets.

- Proposal states that "Irving complies with the full force of Texas's proscribed evaluation systems for teachers, principals and

superintendents". They also have created a mechanism for stakeholders to participate through the Campus Improvement Committee. CIC is "charged with assisting the campus principal in decisions regarding the improvement of student performance for all students."

-A topic that may impede progress is noted in the narrative "Active teacher associations in the district were invited to provide input and represent teacher interests during the development of this proposal. Evidence of conditional or qualified support for this grant application by association leaders expressing reservations regarding the link of student achievement data to the performance evaluations of teachers is included in the appendix." Applicant is recognized for identifying and reporting this issue as it is one that will require follow-up.

-The district has demonstrated they have the capacity to implement and evaluate their initiatives within the district environment and they also have shown significant commitment to follow both state and federal guidelines. Similar projects previously funded, especially in the technology area and career readiness proves their ability to function with autonomy. Personalized learning strategies have been used in many of the "Signature Courses and Programs". They have proven successful on a small scale. The proposal outlines a solid plan to implement these concepts district wide over the next four years. As the letters of support indicate the district has already garnered tremendous support from the local business community.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	10
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

-District shared extensive past efforts to engage and gain support from stakeholders, particularly the business community and parents. Their partnerships have been very successful. For example in 2011 the district was selected by the Big Brother/Big Sister program to pilot Mentor 2.0 program. This program is designed to work with 9th graders who are at risk of not completing school. In 2003, Irving was selected by Microsoft as a Center of excellence.

-Each school building has a Campus Improvement Committee (CIC) is charged with assisting the building principal in decisions regarding improvement of student performance for all students. "CIC comprised of the campus principal, four elected classroom teachers, one elected District-level professional staff member, four parents, two community members, two business representatives and two students."

-Appendix includes key letters of support were obtained showing support for the grant. Applicant identifies conditional support from teacher association leadership regarding the link of student achievement data to the performance evaluations of teachers. District is well aware that this issue will have to be discussed further.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	4
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(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

Gaps were identified and programs designed to address them. Example: A need for more career/tech training resulted in the creation of the Signature Program, an effort to increase rigor, choice and student interest.

Grant proposal states "Throughout the process to build a vision, needs were analyzed based on state test scores in mathematics". Unfortunately, little information was given as to how this new program will provide instruction to meet the needs of students with special needs. Extensive information is shared for implementing the Irving ISD iAIM Project.

C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	19

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

-Career exploration strategies are vertically aligned so students will begin with awareness at middle school and advance to exploration in high school. The new Signature Program in career/Technical Education has been expanded to include more options. The proposal notes that Irving offers an extensive IB program and AP courses. Commercial resources such as iAIM will be used throughout the district.

-District proposal is designed to provide personalized learning opportunities to all students yet, little information was provided

as to how personalized learning will be adapted to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

-Information about resources supporting the district plan and this criterion was very adequate and inclusive of all priorities noted in the grant. For example, a vertically aligned learning curve is established by "The iAIM to the Nth Degree project-based career-driven math paradigm will focus on learning strands for both middle and high school, through Algebra, to capture both students who are on grade and those students up to three years behind."

-Applicant provides details about a "Learning Trajectory" approach "in which teachers can move linearly through a topic." This concept is defined as a "way to organize mathematical concepts around the "big ideas" in most standards." Applicant demonstrates how these concepts are implemented to be aligned with careers by including real-life, relevant learning and a project-based curriculum.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)

20

19

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

-Applicant clearly conveys the need for personalized learning opportunities as evidenced by the number of students not completing high school.

-Proposal outlines plans for professional development of effective teachers that includes a wide variety of learning opportunities. Formal college level study program opportunities were not shared in this grant proposal.

-Extensive college and career planning activities are shared in the grant but partnering with career/technical schools and colleges to offer on-site resources were not mentioned.

-District's commitment to building capacity for highly effective teachers is evident by looking at record of professional development. Effective training includes week-long, intensive instructional institutes supported by PLC initiatives within the district.

-Need for personalized learning opportunities is reinforced when considering the graduation rates and the percentage of students who choose to continue high school into a fifth year.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	15
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>-Administrative structure appears to be extensive. Proposal outlines all positions specifically created to administer the grant. In the narrative the applicant provides details about existing administrative functions within the district. A timeline is also provided for implementation of "Irving ISD iAIM Project".</p> <p>-District Improvement Committee is a cross section of all stakeholder groups and effective in providing advice.</p> <p>-"Balanced Scoreboard" is an effective tool to keep everyone apprised of district and student progress.</p> <p>-Ample opportunity for students to show mastery of content through re-teach/re-assessment methods.</p> <p>-The proposal discusses personalized learning opportunities as a means to engage students and re-construct classrooms in to effective learning spaces. The proposal states "The goal of college and career readiness programming is...to simply prepare students for readiness for post-secondary education and training, first jobs and future careers." Also "College readiness and career readiness are not mutually exclusive and require many of the same skills...both are based on personalized learning". Applicant shares extensive information about the changes that will be made to become more college/career ready and intertwines these efforts with personalized learning experiences and strategies.</p> <p>District has plans to establish district improvement committee to advise staff regarding progress of implementation etc. Also proposes to use "Balanced Scoreboard" to keep everyone informed about student progress.</p> <p>In conclusion, to be successful, this initiative will require both veteran staff and additional employees who will focus on implementation of the grant components. Technology upgrades throughout the district will be critical too.</p>		

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	10
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -District has incorporated strategies to insure all middle and high school students will use 1:1 technology and have access to home based internet services. Critical to this project is 24/7 access to online resources. This will create a huge resource for these students. Budget indicates purchase of home-based internet service for 400 high needs students at going market rate. Advances in technology may provide less costly alternatives, such as "personal hot spots" to address this need. -This is a gap, but not a detriment to be noted- Grant does not indicate if students pay anything, including a nominal service fee for Internet access at home. It also does not indicate if community vendors were approached to provide basic service at reduced costs. -District has plans to centralize all data systems so they are seamless and accessible. 		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	14
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use of third party evaluator will provide objectivity and transparency. -Goal to create a data culture within the school will provide comprehensive approach to assess and evaluate the quality of instruction. -Planned reporting to all community stakeholders will build necessary support and understanding. -Staff and student access to higher education resources, if available, were not mentioned in this grant. This could be a major asset that has been overlooked. 		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Efforts to include community partners, parents and staff in analyzing program progress are very adequate. Examples include: "Project Leadership Team will work closely with the Program Evaluation Coordinator to build a set of outcome indicators that measure change..." also "Businesses will be brought in to discuss career opportunities..."</p> <p>District is implementing a Leadership Development program as a companion to this grant. There are plans to bring in businesses to discuss career opportunities and share information on new employee to orientation/training. Also key groups will be surveyed regarding technology effectiveness.</p> <p>"The project will develop informational materials which summarize the project in quarterly single page updates which summarize outcomes to date."</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Since applicant's PEIMS student performance measures system and STAAR system are new there is no data to report as evidenced by this comment found in the application "It should be noted that the data system changes in Texas might require some discontinuous measurements in student achievement in the short run. The new state assessments are currently being calibrated and determinations of "proficiency" are due to be established by January 2013.</p> <p>The applicant did meet the criteria and provided 12 performance measures and discussed their plan to monitor and evaluate progress at the individual student, classroom, school building, and district performance levels.</p> <p>The proposal proposes to use third party evaluation process to assess progress and evaluate the quality of the instructional program. Proposal shared many research citations and research based evaluation tools.</p>		

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Use of a software based product allows for multiple survey topics including career readiness and ensures unbiased reporting. The applicant describes the use of technology based instruction as essential to implementing personalized learning. Success will be evidenced by the continuous improvement process proposed to assess results.</p>		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	10
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -District proposal to hire staff to implement and evaluate this project appears reasonable. -Numerous district staff will be reassigned to work on this too. -Staff hired will not continue beyond the duration of the grant. -Local plans to sustain the project component beyond the grant period are achievable and appropriate. -Budget proposal is reasonable and provides significant funding from other sources. This will support the project beyond the grant funded period. Plans also call for transparent public oversight and continuous improvement based on performance data. All these factors when implemented will maintain the momentum of the program over time. 		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	10
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Long range planning will ensure that components of this project are sustainable through local budget and funding sources and re-purposing existing grant funding where possible. Specific references are noted in the budget documents included in this grant.</p> <p>Grant also states" to assure the Irving ISD continuous improvement process moves outside the walls of education, the project will introduce strategies for sharing program information and best practices with non-participating school staff, parents, and business and community partners"</p>		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:		

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met
<p>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>District has met the requirements of the grant and provided extensive information and narrative describing the strategies it will implement to address the four core educational assurance areas noted in the grant. The plans to address the low student</p>		

performance in mathematics, integrated with a personalized learning system that is tied to college and career ready experience are ambitious. The district also built this proposal on previous success including their dual language program, virtual school offerings, career academies, professional development programs and technology implementation. Finally resources have been acquired through national grant recognition and community partnerships.

Total	210	192
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0437TX-2 for Irving Independent School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(A)(1) Score = 8/10</p> <p>The Irving School District (ISD) demonstrates a comprehensive vision for personalizing the teaching and learning for every student through their proposed <i>iAIM to the Nth Degree Program</i>. ISD has clearly presented four top priorities for their middle and high school math teachers: (1.) personalize instruction for each student, (2.) place instruction in real-world contexts so as to engage students, (3.) ensure each student's learning style is accommodated, (4.) create a learning environment that allows students to progress at own pace demonstrating competencies versus seat-time.</p> <p>All of these priorities to increase teacher effectiveness represent the heart of personalized learning with implications for the U.S. education system. ISD has identified their primary problem, low math scores, and appropriate strategies to solve the math achievement levels for all groups. Additionally, ISD is proposing to develop a "personalized career pathway" to: "reflect their own individual interests, the realities of the marketplace, careers in demand and growth, and the secondary and post-secondary courses and training required to enter their chosen careers." This proposed personalized career pathway that is career driven for 21st century jobs, will guide student learning and teacher instruction, which represents the state of the art of personalized learning.</p> <p>Two of the four core educational assurance areas are discussed: adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy; and, developing effective teachers where they are needed most.</p> <p>ISD is proposing to use math standardized test scores to measure teacher effectiveness, where 80% of 6, 7, and 8th graders met grade level expectations on the 2010-2011 TAKS math tests. 62% of 9th graders, and 72% of 10th graders met grade level expectations. Significant achievement gaps exist between white students and numerous other subgroups, an area identified as needing improvement through this grant.</p> <p>What is missing from this discussion is conceptualization of how teacher effectiveness will be measured in a personalized learning environment using metrics such as critical thinking, STEM competencies, among others. According to this proposal: "To date, Irving ISD has not tracked teacher effectiveness as defined for the purposes of this grant, so a "best guess" approach to estimate teacher effectiveness used student performance on state assessments in math."</p> <p>Overall, this places ISD at the bottom of the high range for this criterion.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	9

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(A)(2) Score = 9 /10

ISD has focused attention on the process of selecting schools, which includes all middle and high schools, for a total of 16, 858 students. Further, they are clear that the lessons learned from the Singley school have served to assist the district recognize, for example, "that in its premiere all career-academy-based high school (Singley), students' math scores far exceeded those in other district high schools. Outside of Singley, the methods used to teach math were not bringing about the desired results of proficient and advanced mathematics achievement. Therefore, this grant reflects a set of changes to "fix" this problem by strategically focusing on students' future careers as a means to personalize their learning. *This same approach will be used to scale across the district to other core subject areas, and will be a model to other districts in Texas and nationwide that are struggling with similar challenges.*"

Overall, this places ISD at the top of the high range.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)

10

9

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

(A)(3) Score = 9/10

Irving ISD's has a clear focus upon the use of STEM instruction as a center piece of their change model to achieve college and career readiness for all students, a particular strength of this proposal. Further, they have solicited input from the local business community who has voiced support for this initiative.

Meaningful school reform will be scaled throughout the district and beyond through: "With RTT-D funding, Irving ISD's Career and Technical Education Program will be scaled up to assure *all students* in middle school and high school—including those in Academic programs—will be engaged in career interest assessments, career exploration, and learning contextual to careers." This places technology driven, personalized learning, career focus at the center of all academic programs, a strength of this proposal with broad implications throughout Texas and the nation.

Overall, this places Irving ISD at the top of the high range.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)

10

9

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

(A)(4) Score = 9/10

Irving ISD goals for student achievement through their proposed *iAim to Nth Degree Program* are ambitious yet achievable. Numerous and comprehensive tables are presented which outline the baseline and year by year goals for improvement for all groups and subgroups, decreasing achievement gaps, and improving graduation rates. Although Table (A)(4)(d) presents college enrollment rates, goals for the grant period and beyond for various subgroups are not listed, a missing component to this proposal for a program whose focus is on equity in college and career readiness.

Overall this places Irving ISD at the top of the high range.

B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	10

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(B)(1) Score = 10/15

Irving ISD has reported lower than state average math scores and has not been able to improve results in all middle and high school grades, and foresees a worsening trend, thus the purpose of this grant proposal. Evidence of their intent is drawn from their proposal: "The focus for this grant is improving students' math achievement in middle school and high school. While Irving students perform only slightly worse (from 0 – 6%) than others in the state on the mathematics portion of TAKS, they perform fully 14% lower in ninth grade. Furthermore, when these scores are aligned with the new state tests being implemented over the next four years (to replace the TAKS), student performance is projected to fall dramatically across the state, and including Irving ISD. Further, subgroup performance is poor at best and includes; 59% of special education students achieving proficiency, 74% Limited English Proficient, and otherwise At-Risk 69%, all indicating the need for a district

wide intervention and revised approach.

Over the past two years, under new leadership, Irving ISD has initiated numerous and innovative new programs, among them are: One-to-One Technology, Dual Language, an online curriculum management system integrated into all subjects and all grade levels, new STEM curricula with a focus upon careers and 21st century skills and project based learning. These programs are foundational to implementing a personalized learning environment. Therefore, as these initiatives are still new data to demonstrate improved student outcomes is not available.

What is missing is a track record of success at improving student achievement over 4 years which is required to score at the high level for this criterion. Overall this places Irving ISD at the high end of the medium range.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)

5

4

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(B)(2) Score = 4/5

Irving ISD has a high level of transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments, including by making public, by school, actual school-level expenditures for regular K-12 instruction, instructional support, pupil support, and school administration. Evidence includes: "The Irving ISD Balanced Scorecard is a web-based system that monitors performance against the district's strategic goals and publishes evaluation results. Accountability reports, including School Ratings, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Report Cards, Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) Reports, Adequate Yearly Progress Reports, and the Texas Education Agency (TEA) School Report Cards are posted for the district and for campuses to provide open access to student achievement data.

The Business and Finance Division reports revenues, expenditures and investment information to the Board of Trustees during public meetings and posts financial statements and budget reports online. The district's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report is posted online to provide a detailed accounting of actual assets, liabilities, revenues and expenditures. Quick links to the Business Office Procedures Manual, Payroll Calendars, and various district forms provide transparent practices and processes for district staff and community members alike."

Overall, this places Irving ISD at the top end of the high range.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)

10

7

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

(B)(3) Score = 7/10

Irving ISD is working closely with state policy to implement evaluation systems for teachers, principals, and superintendents. This grant will enhance the data reporting capabilities to improve teacher effectiveness and data driven pedagogical decisions. What is missing is a description of the relationship between Irving ISD and state policy makers that demonstrates the independence from the state and supportive policies to implement the personalized learning environment as proposed, such as changing seat-time requirements to allow for experiential-real world learning opportunities.

Overall this places Irving ISD at the high end of the middle range.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)

10

8

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

(B)(4) Score = 8 /10

Irving ISD has thoroughly engaged numerous stakeholders in the formulation of this proposal, including: Big Brothers-Big Sisters to provide socio-emotional support and mentorship, professional learning committees suggested professional development needs, campus instructional leadership teams suggested additional teacher training as the critical link to integrating technology into classroom instruction proposed, and the campus improvement planning committee involves community members, business leaders, and school leadership to identify opportunities for improvement overall and math achievement and technology capabilities as proposed.

However, as evidenced in the letters of support included in this proposal, some offer "conditional" support. Conditional because this proposal calls for developing a teacher evaluation system that uses student math achievement scores as measures of growth and teacher effectiveness. Absent was a letter of support and input from the Mayor and school board members.

Overall this places Irving ISD at the bottom of the high range.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)

5

3

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

(B)(5) Score = 3/5

Irving ISD demonstrates an awareness of the lack of teacher professional development and levels of effectiveness, as well as technology resources in their district. This criterion specifically requests a focus upon gaps in the personalized learning environment plan, which in this case is the iAim to the Nth Degree program. Not mentioned is the need to develop metrics for assessing the degree to which teachers have an understanding of how to develop curricula around students' interests and strengths, as examples. Further, a high quality plan would need to mention the need to be trained in personalized teaching methods such as flipped classroom, differentiated learning, among others.

Finally, it is clear from this proposal that Irving ISD needs to develop their teachers abilities to teach math, which is the focus of this proposal. What is missing is a focus upon personalized learning and how to develop a comprehensive framework for their district and students' personalized learning. Additionally, to tie the success of this proposal to improved increased math scores and to measure teacher effectiveness based upon these does represent a view that personalized learning has additional components to improve teacher effectiveness. This is perhaps the largest gap in their plan and proposal.

Overall this places Irving ISD at the high end of the medium range.

C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	19
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(C)(1) Score = 19 /20</p> <p>Irving ISD had an innovative approach to personalizing the learning for all students through the unique combination of career and technical with college preparatory curricula to focus upon knowledge and skills for the 21st century. Irving ISD's plan calls for a focus upon: technology-driven, project-based mathematics content that is personalized to the learner's needs; early career exploration beginning in middle school which is developmental appropriate; and, personalized programs of study.</p> <p>Irving ISD has also focused upon how to deepen the learning experiences of all students through their iAim to the Nth Degree program. Students will be engaged in their learning by applying knowledge through project-based learning activities out in the real-world aligned with their own personal interests and purposes. Additionally, teachers will utilize a well researched method of teaching developmentally appropriate mathematical concepts known as "learning trajectories." Another feature of the Irving ISD proposed plan is to have students themselves, working with counselors and parents, develop and drive their own individual learning plans around their career interests. Finally, of particular importance and significance is the focus upon additional soft skills that are integral to producing students with 21st century skills. These include: communication, reasoning, and problem-solving skills, motivation, ability to work with others, cooperation, attention, self-regulation, and self-esteem may be equally or more predictive of schooling, wages, healthy behaviors, and success than cognitive skills.</p> <p>What is missing are assessment tools to help assist self esteem, motivation, and the other essential 21st century skills.</p> <p>Overall this places Irving ISD at the top of the high range.</p>		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	17
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(C)(2) Score = 17 /20</p> <p>Irving ISD has a thorough professional development plan to personalize the teaching and learning for all students. This plan calls for hiring a professional development coordinator to work closely with the numerous professional learning communities that will be formed around subject and grade levels. Important to note that they envision using the coaching model of teaching in their classrooms as well as in their own professional development. Coaching will focus upon the flipped classroom method which is a hybrid model of teaching and learning incorporating both face-to-face teacher student interactions with online self</p>		

directed learning through video and other multi-media assets. By utilizing the flipped classroom methods, numerous data points can be captured throughout a student's learning trajectory so as to assess progress and provide interventions through coaching when needed.

Irving ISD's plan also includes using the latest methods of capturing and measuring teacher effectiveness. These include the use of actual student data captured from software used in the flipped classroom to measure teaching best practices. Teachers will be video taped presenting lessons that will be used for two purposes; to demonstrate effective practice and for student viewing as a part of the self directed learning required in a flipped classroom. These multi-media approaches represent teacher training best practices and serve as a potential model for Texas and the nation.

What is missing is a comprehensive framework for how instructional strategies will be changed to adapt to changing individual student interests, needs, and aspirations, and technology for capturing this data.

Overall this places Irving ISD at in the middle of the high range.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	13
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: (D)(1) Score = 13 /15 The Irving ISD has in place a central office management structure to oversee the successful implementation of this personalized learning environment proposal for the life of the grant and beyond. Examples include: a District Improvement Committee made up of 47 community, business, parents, and student and teacher members. Additionally, a grant coordinator will ensure the success of the implementation of the grant awarded. Their commitment appears to be at all levels including: Assistant Superintendent of Academic Services in charge of whole child, teacher performance, and curricula initiatives and results, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services and Federal Programs who has responsibility for monitoring PK-16 Academic and Career Counseling services so important to this college and career ready priority and initiative; and, the Director of Instructional Technology Services will play a key role when implementing technology enhancements as a part of a comprehensive personalize learning program. Irving ISD has also focused upon students competency based learning where grades are determined through a combination of both summative and formative assessments so as to determine is competencies are aligned with student interests, the cornerstone of personalized learning. What is missing is a commitment to change seat-time requirements through close coordination with Texas Agency, state policy makers, to allow for more real-world, project based activities outside of the schools walls consistent with the stated goal of more STEM activities and authentic assignments and assessments. Overall this places Irving ISD in the middle of the high range.		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	9
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: (D)(2) Score = 9/10 The Irving ISD has made significant commitments to creating a technology rich environment for all students. Since 2001 each high school student has had a laptop computer, and the district is making strides to take advantage of cloud computing and web-based applications for teachers and students alike. Further, Irving ISD is working closely with textbook publishers to develop and utilize digital texts for all subjects. Finally, Irving ISD provides multiple levels of technical support to teachers and students, which will be enhanced through this grant funding. Irving ISD has a solid interoperability data system in use consisting of the PCG Data Management System which serves as foundational. This system makes student level, administrative level, and parent level and school leadership data available to numerous stakeholders and constituents. The proposed iAim program will work within this robust data management system. Overall this places Irving ISD at the top of the high range.		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	14
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(E)(1) Score = 14 /15</p> <p>Irving ISD has demonstrated a strong record of implementing a continuous improvement process known as “the district walkthrough,” for programs already implemented, and has proposed hiring a dedicated Program Evaluation Specialist who has the responsibility for coordinating and communicating all grant progress. ISD utilizes a central database called, <i>Eduphoria</i>, for the purposes of capturing a wide variety of metrics, many of which will be useful for monitoring the proposed iAim to the Nth Degree program.</p> <p>In Appendix F is the checklist used during the walkthrough, two categories of data already listed on this checklist support a personalized learning approach; Relevance, which determines if the lesson content is connected to student interests, and Learning Roles, which determines if learning is teacher led, student led or shared. This approach and data capture ability are of critical importance to continuous improvement efforts. Irving's proposed program evaluation coordinator will add to the category of data captured and analyzed, such as “how is career focused math being included?” among others.</p> <p>Overall this places Irving ISD in the top end of the high range.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(E)(2) Score = 5/5</p> <p>The Irving ISD has in place a thorough communications plan that involves the Program Evaluation Specialist working closely with district leadership and teachers initially, and then key stakeholders external to the school personnel as the project progresses.</p> <p>Overall Irving ISD is in the top of the high range.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	4
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(E)(4) Score = 4/5</p> <p>The Irving ISD has a focused attention on the use of data and has provided a comprehensive set of baseline and projected measures or goals during the life of the grant and post grant. Of particular note is their use of and involvement in the Texas Success Initiative, which evaluates 9-12 grade students' readiness for higher education.</p> <p>What is missing are measures for career readiness, the applicant proposes to determine these as a part of the grant implementation.</p> <p>This places Irving ISD at the top of the high range for this criterion.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(E)(4) Score = 3/5</p> <p>The Irving ISD had considered numerous ways to review the effectiveness of their RTT grant, including student surveys to measure soft skills improvements, use of standardized math test scores, improved teacher evaluations for measures of teaching effectiveness. What is missing is a discussion about what changes they are proposing to make as a part of implementing this grant and iAim program. Examples could include: changes to teacher schedules for more planning, changes to school schedules to accommodate out of school learning activities to demonstrate competencies, and including the Common Core curricula and SMART tests, or others.</p>		

Irving ISD has proposed hiring an Evaluation Specialist who will collect data on progress and improvements, along with the expanded use of district wide "walkthrough" system. These approaches are inadequate to evaluate the effective use of grant funds, the return on investment over and above student test scores.

Overall this places the Irving ISD at the high end of the middle range.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	8
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(F)(1) Score = 8/10</p> <p>The Irving ISD has a well thought through itemized budget for the iAim to the Nth Degree program/project consisting of both grant funding and other sources of funds for this project. The grant funding request is for \$27, 906, 347, with an additional \$67, 196, 944 from LEA, state and federal sources. Table 4-1 is very detailed and represents a thorough understanding of the effective use of grant funds, a strength of this proposal.</p> <p>What is missing are enough resources dedicated to the professional development of teachers to implement the iAim program and along with developing a new teacher evaluation system which relies upon the use of student test data as key measures, and college and career readiness measures tailored to each student's individualized interests and learning trajectories. Further, additional funds will be required to support the flipped classroom model proposed in the form of software licenses or Khan Academy access fees. Additionally, funds to sustain the program post grant period are not viewed as significant and can be incorporated into the Irving ISD school budget once new practices are operationalized. For example, the \$10 million requested for digital devices is a onetime request. The useful life of most devices is approximately four years, so therefore, the post grant purchase for new devices has not been thoroughly analyzed and included.</p> <p>Overall, this places the Irving ISD in the top of the high range.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	8
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(F)(2) Score = 8/10</p> <p>The Irving ISD grant funding request is for \$27, 906, 347, with an additional \$67, 196, 944 from LEA, state and federal sources. What is missing are enough resources dedicated to the professional development of teachers to implement the iAim program and along with developing a new teacher evaluation system which relies upon the use of student test data as key measures, and college and career readiness measures tailored to each student's individualized interests and learning trajectories. Further, additional funds will be required to support the flipped classroom model proposed in the form of software licenses or Khan Academy access fees. Additionally, funds to sustain the program post grant period are not viewed as significant and can be incorporated into the Irving ISD school budget once new practices are operationalized. For example, the \$10 million requested for digital devices is a onetime request. The useful life of most devices is approximately four years, so therefore, the post grant purchase for new devices has not been thoroughly analyzed and included.</p> <p>Finally, a weakness is that Irving is proposing using Title I funds and Perkins grant funds post RTT grant funding to sustain this iAim project, versus seeking to secure additional funding from their strong local support from an active and engaged business community.</p> <p>Overall, this places the Irving ISD in the top of the high range.</p>		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	7
<p>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Competitive Preference Priority Score = 7/10</p>		

The Irving ISD has a strong record of creating innovative programs to support career and technical education through its ISD Signature Studies program. This program and approach will intensify and expand using the iAim program grant funding.

Further, Irving ISD has in place numerous relationships with local businesses for experiential and extended learning opportunities which are important when building a personalized learning environment, as in: “Irving’s focus on career-centered programs of study, offered at multiple sites, include Arts, AV Technology and Communication; Business, Marketing and Finance; Education; Hospitality and Tourism; and Transportation, and Distribution and Logistics. At the Barbara Cardwell Career Preparatory Center, Irving’s nontraditional high school, students can enroll in programs aligned with jobs in demand—e.g., Certified Nursing Assistant, Home Health Aide, Hydro Engineer, Automotive Technician, Diesel Technician, Collision and Repair Technician, Beautician, Esthetician, and Logistics and Management.

All CTE Signature Studies Programs offer students the opportunity to earn one or more industry-standard certifications within their selected Program of Study. Beginning with the Class of 2014, all Texas graduates who graduate under the Distinguished Achievement or Recommended Plan are required to earn four (4) credits in each core subject (English, Math, Science, and Social Studies). This integration of CTE and Academic courses assures all students are career and college ready.”

What is missing is a discussion of socio-emotional measures and program supports, or the softer skills mentioned in this proposal. Additionally, the partnership with identified vendors for software, flipped classroom resources, et al would also be important.

Overall, this places the Irving ISD at the high end of the middle range.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The Irving Independent School District (ISD) demonstrates a comprehensive vision for personalizing the teaching and learning for every student through their proposed *iAIM to the Nth Degree Program*. ISD has clearly presented four top priorities for their middle and high school math teachers: (1.) personalize instruction for each student, (2.) place instruction in real-world contexts so as to engage students, (3.) ensure each student’s learning style is accommodated, (4.) create a learning environment that allows students to progress at own pace demonstrating competencies versus seat-time.

All of these priorities to increase teacher effectiveness represent the heart of personalized learning with implications for the U.S. education system. ISD has identified their primary problem, low math scores, and appropriate strategies to solve the math achievement levels for all groups. Additionally, Irving ISD is proposing to develop a “personalized career pathway” to: “reflect their own individual interests, the realities of the marketplace, careers in demand and growth, and the secondary and post-secondary courses and training required to enter their chosen careers.” This proposed personalized career pathway that is career driven for 21st century jobs, will guide student learning and teacher instruction, which represents the state of the art of personalized learning.

The Irving ISD has focused attention on the process of selecting schools, which includes all middle and high schools, for a total of 16, 858 students. Further, they are clear that the lessons learned from the Singley school have served to assist the district recognize, for example, “that in its premiere all career-academy-based high school (Singley), students’ math scores far exceeded those in other district high schools. Outside of Singley, the methods used to teach math were not bringing about the desired results of proficient and advanced mathematics achievement. Therefore, this grant reflects a set of changes to “fix” this problem by strategically focusing on students’ future careers as a means to personalize their learning. *This same approach will be used to scale across the district to other core subject areas, and will be a model to other districts in Texas and nationwide that are struggling with similar challenges.*”

Irving ISD has a clear focus upon the use of STEM instruction as a center piece of their change model to achieve college and career readiness for all students, a particular strength of this proposal. Further, they have solicited input from the local business community who has voiced support for this initiative.

The Irving ISD has a strong record of creating innovative programs to support career and technical education through its ISD Signature Studies program. This program and approach will intensify and expand using the iAim program grant funding. Finally, it is clear from this proposal that Irving ISD needs to develop their teachers abilities to teach math, which is the focus

of this proposal.

Total	210	174
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0437TX-3 for Irving Independent School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The proposal makes a strong connection between educator effectiveness and student outcomes (college and career ready) - with particular focus on math. This emphasis is furthered by a strong connection to data-based decision making as a way for teachers to become effective and for students to learn. This represents a strong connection to the four assurance areas.</p> <p>The proposal also made strong connections to differentiated learning that is both focused on careers as well as students interests. This differentiated or personalized learning system goes as far as to suggest each student will establish his or her own GPS plan with regard to future careers and how current learning does or does not align with that GPS. The goal of increased math scores is connected to increased college and career readiness in the proposal. This focus is also well-grounded in the current district need regarding math performance.</p> <p>All of this evidence demonstrates a strong connection to the key assurance areas as well as a comprehensive and well-conceived vision. Everything in the vision is aligned toward the key assurance areas regarding reform and student learning</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The proposal references reforms and a plan of implementation that focuses on connecting school to the world of work and career.</p> <p>The District's emphasis on technology (e.g., flipped classrooms and providing more technology for middle-school students) seems a reasonable plan for implementation.</p> <p>The goal of "all math teachers being highly effective" seems unreasonable. The definition of highly-effective in this program means growth of 1.5yrs in a one-year period. This is an overly-ambitious goal that is not likely achievable.</p> <p>A great deal of information was provided regarding programming details, but this wasn't what the selection criteria wanted. Information on student selection, sampling, and demographics were absent. After several pages the proposal references that all middle and high school students will participate. This seems reasonable based on the overall grant purpose. Plenty of information regarding demographics was provided, although some was district-wide as opposed to specific to middle and high school participants.</p> <p>The proposal referenced the importance of technology training beyond simply providing technology. This is a key point since simply providing technology is unlikely to result in the outcomes that are the goal of this proposal.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	5

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Much information was provided with regard to District need or challenge. However, information does not address plans for scale-up to other schools (such as elementary) since the grant will deal with all MS and HS students.

Technology can lead to personalized learning and can help with scale. However, this section did not address how this would be accomplished. The logic model finally provided some of the information expected in a high-quality plan. That being said, this still did not address scale or provide all of the information necessary for a high-quality plan.

Much of the information provided in this section deals with vision and some intro-level details, but does not address how these details will be scaled up to the full District beyond saying it will be.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)

10

6

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

A4a - The information provided in this section is not in response to the application or selection criteria. The proposal references a significant need, but this does not indicate a plan or goals regarding improvement.

A4b - Demonstrating the problem or the need is not a plan for improvement on the measures referenced in the application. Much information was provided regarding an existing need, but the details regarding goals and outcomes were lacking.

The 6th grade math goals present different starting baseline data for various groups, but then also show that each group will reach a similar outcome in the end. This is not reasonable. Some groups will start at 34% and move to 80% while others start at 61% and move to 80%.

Some of the achievement gap goals do not appear to be ambitious - very small change.

This section was to be focused on ambitious yet achievable goals with regard to four (a-d) indicator areas. This was not provided in the proposal beyond the tables. The earlier goals and action steps that were provided dealt with hiring and other logistics - not with the measurable outcomes outlined in the selection criteria.

B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	3
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The programs and career-focused academies as an intervention referenced in the proposal are not presented along with data showing their influence on student learning or reform. The information provided under B1a does not demonstrate improved student learning, closing of achievement gaps, etc.</p> <p>B1b - Evidence is missing from this section regarding reform to low-achieving schools.</p> <p>B1c - This section of the proposal provided no information with regard to making student performance data available.</p> <p>This entire section (B1) of the proposal failed to provide evidence that the program referenced resulted in increased student achievement. There was also no information provided that the District makes student achievement data widely available.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	2
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The information provided in this section was very general and did not address the specific selection criteria. A passing reference was made to salary schedules being available, but actual personnel salaries (teaching and non-instructional) as well as non-personnel expenditures were not discussed. More information would be needed in order to evaluate the degree to which the District has a past record of transparency in these areas. A large amount of the information provided under the B2a, B2b, and B2c headings is not relevant to the review / selection criteria for this section and as such did not provide information regarding salaries and expenditures.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	3

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

No information was provided in this section of the proposal regarding District autonomy. The proposal stated that the District was in-line with the State regarding autonomy and legal authority. However, no information or evidence was provided to support this fact. No information was provided to demonstrate that the District has the authority to implement its desired reforms.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)

10

5

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The District demonstrated moderate involvement and engagement with parents as well as some community groups (e.g., some meetings and presentations). However, it is not clear to what extent stakeholders were involved in the actual drafting and development of the proposal as opposed to simply being informed.

The letter from the Irving ATPE indicates a lack of support from a key stakeholder group. This letter outlined several significant concerns that were not addressed in the proposal. The reluctance of this group as well as several other groups to engage in the use of student growth in test scores as a measure of teacher effectiveness is a significant barrier to the success of this proposal.

No information was provided regarding support from the District's teachers union.

Although several local business groups support the project, the conditional support from education groups and the lack of information regarding support from the local educators is a serious issue.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)

5

2

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The proposal has established a need with regard to math achievement. However, this section did not address how this need would be further evaluated and established if funded. The selection criteria specified a high-quality plan for evaluating need in order to allow the district to make data-based / need-based decisions. This information is missing.

The District is requesting funds to replace aging computers. It is unclear how this connects to the four assurance areas.

Much information is presented on what will happen and how, but that information does not specify what needs-assessment will happen first to make sure that actions are based on need and evidence.

C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	12

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The statement that "vocational education of the past was a failure" does not seem to connect to the rest of the proposal in this section.

The proposal in this section fails to address the selection criteria. The District makes several general statements in the first few pages and makes broad statements for what will happen. This information does not represent a high-quality plan (see components required for such a plan). For example, the project scenarios described as part of the proposed intervention in the proposal sound good, but it's not clear how they will happen. It is also not clear how those scenarios are connected to grant outcomes and objectives.

The use of the career planning tool is well-connected with grant objectives. However, it's not clear how this tool will be developed or used. The connection to careers is clear, but the connection to math and high academic standards is less clear. The focus on pre-assessment and needs-based instruction is well-aligned with the grant priorities.

The citations do not support the information for this section. Knowing that soft skill are important is fine, but it does not connect to the District's plan for implementing personalized learning plans.

The goals, timeline, deliverables, and responsible parties chart and information lacks detail. The information provided throughout this section does not represent a high-quality plan. Looking at what is provided it is not clear what the District will actually do. Some information was provided regarding career-personalization and exploration, but it's not clear how will this

will increase graduation rates, close achievement gaps, and increase math scores. It's also not clear how math instruction will be personalized. There is also no mention to student feedback.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)

20

9

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

There are many statements such as "professional development will be provided" and frequent measures of student data will be used. However, this is not a high-quality plan. Evidence is not provided for how this will happen and what outcomes will be measured. The table at the end of the section provides some of this information, but it's still not clear how these data and resources will get to educators and how they will be trained to use such data.

The proposal references that a plan will be developed for personalized learning environments. However, that plan is supposed to be part of this proposal. This information is not provided.

It's not clear that one coach per high school will be able to effectively support teachers to provide personalized learning environments.

References have been made several times to flipped classrooms. However, it's not clear how these are part of the District's plan. It's not clear that part ii presents information regarding how teachers will gain the skills necessary to personalize learning. Some points regarding allowing more time for individualized interaction are explained, but it's still not clear how this will happen (plan).

Part iii is a detailed example of a general statement of purpose, but this is not a plan. It's not clear what will be done to make sure that teachers can and will use frequent assessments to measure progress.

Part bi provides little information regarding how educators will identify optimal learning approaches. Having labor market information is indirectly related to this topic, but it doesn't identify student interests or needs. No information is provided to show educators will have the training to use information regarding student interests and needs.

bii - It is evident that the focus will be on those 16 career clusters, but this does not address how educators will be trained or if they will have access. Whether or not educators will have access to and training to use learning resources is not clear. As with other sections, this information is related to what was to be provided, but it does not demonstrate that teachers will be able to use the tools provided and necessary to prepare students.

biii - this section references thinking maps as a tool to help match student needs with resources and instruction. However, just referencing the name of a tool does not make a high-quality plan for how this tool will be used to accomplish its goal and also how teachers will be trained to use the tool.

ci - the plan for how educator effectiveness information will be used to improve teacher effectiveness consists of wording that teachers will be encouraged to develop their own plan to meet their own goals. This does not meet the definition of a teacher evaluation system. Further, it's not clear that even if such a system were to be used it would improve student learning

cii - No information was provided regarding closing student achievement gaps

d - The proposed plan for increasing the number of students who will be taught by effective teachers consists of wording that professional development will naturally make this happen. This is not convincing nor does it represent a high-quality plan. The idea of allowing colleagues view videotapes of each other as a form of professional development is not explained with regard to how it will influence teacher practices. More information is needed.

Part iv does not address how teacher and principal evaluation information will be used to improve practice. Nor does it present what information or training will be provided to make sure that such information is used.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	5

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

No information was provided under D1 to show that the Central Office has sufficient flexibility to implement the plan (a). It also wasn't clear if individual schools would have the power to modify school structure, schedule, etc. to facilitate the plan (b).

Some information was provided regarding how students might be graded or assessed via mastery or with multiple forms (or re-

tested to assure mastery) (c&d).

No information is given regarding learning resources and practices for at risk or disabled students.

Overall this section failed to demonstrate that practices or policies are in place to support the proposed program.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	8
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The District already provides computer access for all high school students. Efforts have also been made to make increasing amounts of material available online for greater access including from student homes. This is part of assuring implementation. However, no other resources or support structures were discussed.</p> <p>b - It's clear that in-school technology support exists via a range of support structures and staffing (tech support services are provided to students and teachers and technology coordinators exist).</p> <p>c - It's clear that parents and students have online access to a range of data including grades, events, and scheduling of classes.</p> <p>d - Data systems seem well-connected and expansive. The issue of whether or not teachers or parents have sufficient training to use such data is less clear.</p>		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	5
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>a - The proposal states that a program evaluation specialist will be hired. However, this does not demonstrate a plan for continuous improvement and reflection. Saying that the new person will handle data distribution and program revision is not a plan.</p> <p>b - The classroom walkthrough idea is detailed and does present an opportunity to gather data for improvement. Still, it's not clear how these data will then be used to make decisions or how teachers will have access to these data.</p> <p>Overall it is not clear what data will be collected, how, and how those data will be used to further revise the program. It's also not clear how or even if these data will be shared with internal or external stakeholders.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The idea of having ongoing presentations from the program evaluation person is well-explained and well-reasoned. However, this does not represent ongoing engagement. The same is true of flyers or materials to be sent home. These may help keep parents and others up to date, but they won't engage them in ongoing improvement.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	2
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Much of the required performance measure information is not presented and instead as listed as TBD. It's unclear why information and data based on a previous assessment (the previous achievement test) were not provided to indicate baseline or to establish targets. Large sections of data targets are missing.</p> <p>Subgroup information was not available for FAFSA completion. However, this was a required component of the application for high-school levels.</p> <p>The proposal provided no data targets regarding college and career-readiness.</p> <p>The ending outcome targets for the TSI are the same for all subgroups. It's unclear why this is the case even though the various groups all have different benchmarks.</p> <p>The narrative discussing the performance measures is very general and does not specify how performance measures will</p>		

provide timely and useful feedback. The application states that this will be done, but does not provide detail.

Information regarding improvement and development of performance measures is very light on detail.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)

5

1

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The questions posed regarding evaluation are well-connected to project objectives. However, a plan is not provided regarding how this evaluation will take place.

The section on technology states that the Program Evaluation Coordinator will conduct evaluation of the grant technology component. However, a plan is not provided nor are details provided for how this will occur.

No plan is provided regarding how the District will reflect on programming in order to continue to improve as a way to meet project outcomes.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	8
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The budget rationale states that 67 million dollars will come from the District with eight million dollars requested each year from RTT. It's not clear what this large District support will cover aside from already existing teachers. It's unclear if these teachers are already hired and will be changed in their roles or if they are the staff who will all be involved in the grant.</p> <p>Information is provided to show that some District money comes from Title I, Perkins Act, local funds, etc. This shows that the proposal details the sources of all funds to be used.</p> <p>The budget is reasonable for the scope of the proposed project.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	3
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>A high-quality plan regarding sustainability is not provided. The proposal states that all costs will end or will be taken over by the District. This does not provide the components necessary for a high-quality plan.</p>		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met
<p>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>This proposal demonstrated a clear focus on the core assurance areas dealing with student achievement, college and career-readiness, and data use. However, very little information was provided regarding teacher, principal, and supt. evaluation data or systems. The letters from the local education groups also indicate unwillingness to use such measures. Regardless, the proposal is focused on personalized learning.</p>		

Total	210	98
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